

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A composite fibrous substrate comprising core fibers and a protein sheath attached around the individual core fibers and wherein the protein sheath is adhered to itself by covalent bonds formed between the protein sheath and a polycarboxylic acid.

2. (Original) A composite fibrous substrate according to claim 1 wherein the protein sheath has at least one auxiliary component.

3. (Original) A composite fibrous substrate according to claim 2 wherein the auxiliary component is selected from the group consisting of metal colloids, magnetic colloids, infrared-absorbing compounds, ultraviolet light-blocking compounds, bioactive agents, flame-retardant chemicals, anti-static agents, odor-absorbing compounds, neutralizers, and hydrolyzable linkers.

Claims 4-20 (Cancelled)

21. (New) A two-dip method for preparing a composite fibrous substrate, the method comprising steps of:

- a) padding a water soluble protein onto a fibrous substrate; and,
- b) padding a polycarboxylic acid onto the product of step "a,"

thereby forming a composite fibrous substrate comprising a protein sheath attached around individual fibers of the substrate and wherein the protein sheath is adhered to itself by covalent bonds formed between the protein sheath and the polycarboxylic acid.

22. (New) The method according to claim 21, wherein step "b" includes addition of a catalyst.

23. (New) The method according to claim 22, wherein the catalyst is sodium hypophosphite.

24. (New) The method according to claim 21, wherein after step "b," the composite fibrous substrate is subjected to step "c":

- c) drying the composite fibrous substrate at a temperature between ambient and 100 °C

25. (New) The method according to claim 24, wherein after step "c," the composite fibrous substrate is subjected to step "d":

- d) curing the composite fibrous substrate at a temperature between 80 °C and 180 °C.

26. (New) A composite fibrous substrate comprising core fibers and a protein sheath attached around the individual core fibers, and wherein the fibrous substrate is produceable by the process of:

- a) padding a water soluble protein onto a fibrous substrate;
- b) padding a polycarboxylic acid onto the product of step "a";
- c) drying the composite fibrous substrate at a temperature between ambient and 100 °C; and,
- d) curing the composite fibrous substrate at a temperature between 80 °C and 180 °C.